Intergovernmental and
Aboriginal Affairs

A Framework for Cooperation

Working with Metis and off-reserve First Nations people

January, 2001

A Framework for Cooperation

Metis and off-reserve First Nations people and the Government of Saskatchewan have a vision of a province that offers opportunity and resources, hope and respect for every person in Saskatchewan. The vision will be achieved by working together and building on *A Framework for Cooperation*, until every person in the province has the opportunity to participate fully in Saskatchewan's society and economy.

To meet this challenge, the Government of Saskatchewan developed the *Framework for Cooperation Policy Statement*, which outlines detailed objectives for each of the priorities discussed in this brochure. In addition to extensive input from the Aboriginal community, the policy document represents input from 12 provincial departments committed to the initiative. If you are interested in reviewing this document, it is available from the "What's New" section of the Government of Saskatchewan web site, www.gov.sk.ca or call (306) 787-6680.

This *Framework* also addresses issues and challenges brought forward by the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP)*. The answers to these challenges will come from our mutual desire to see a brighter future for all Saskatchewan.

Education

Community participants said their priorities for the future include primary, secondary and post-secondary education with an emphasis on assisting Aboriginal children to stay in school, keep them in school, and graduate from high school.

These are the objectives developed to address these priorities.

1. Increase retention rates in high school for Metis and off-reserve First Nations students.
2. Increase the proportion of Metis and off-reserve First Nations students completing high school, or an equivalent.
3. Increase literacy rates, academic upgrading and life skills of Metis and off-reserve First Nations people.
4. Increase enrollment and completion rates for Metis and off-reserve First Nations people in university, technical education, apprenticeship and training programs.
5. Increase Aboriginal children's readiness to learn, cope and problem-solve in the provincial school system.
6. Increase achievement rates for Metis and off-reserve First Nations students in the provincial school system.

Skills Training and Work Preparation

Community participants said their priorities for the future include skills training and work preparation to equip people so they can actively participate in the provincial workforce.

These are the objectives developed to address these priorities.

1. Increase enrollment and completion rates for Metis and off-reserve First Nations students in apprenticeship, training and post-secondary education programs that relate to growth sectors of the economy and sectors with stable employment opportunities.
2. Ensure Metis and off-reserve First Nations youth make the transition from school to employment and training.

Jobs and Economic Development Opportunities

Community participants said their priorities for the future include jobs and economic development to facilitate family stability.

These are the objectives developed to address these priorities.

1. Increase the proportion of employed Metis and off-reserve First Nations people in the labour market to a representative level.
2. Achieve a representative presence of Metis and off-reserve First Nations people in the provincial public service by 2010, in accordance with government's Employment Equity Plan, as directed by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.
3. Achieve a representative presence of Metis and off-reserve First Nations people in economic development, business involvement, and as employers.

Improving Individual and Community Well-Being

Community participants said their priorities for the future include youth (keeping children off the streets and sport and recreation activities), the rising incidence of diabetes among Metis and First Nations people, culturally-sensitive social services, and housing.

These are the objectives developed to address these priorities.

1. Expand access to culturally appropriate social services and reduce the need for such services among Metis and off-reserve First Nations people.
2. Bring Metis and off-reserve First Nations peoples' participation rates in cultural, sport and recreational activities in line with non-Aboriginal participation rates.

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3. Better meet the health needs of Metis and off-reserve First nations people such that their health status approximates that of the non-Aboriginal population.
4. Increase Metis and off-reserve First Nations peoples' representation on a minimum of four or five additional health governance structures, especially District Health Boards, until representative participation is achieved.
5. Develop culturally appropriate restorative justice strategies with Metis and off-reserve First Nations people that constructively respond to crime and reduce off-reserve Aboriginal crime rates.
6. Enhance the safety and security of Aboriginal women and children by reducing victimization rates.
7. Reduce the incidence of repeat offending among Metis and off-reserve First Nations people through reintegrative and rehabilitative correctional services.
8. Increase the proportion of Metis and off-reserve First Nations people living in adequate, affordable housing.

Next Steps

Now the work begins. The Government of Saskatchewan in partnership with Metis and off-reserve First Nations people, Aboriginal institutions, and all levels of government, will determine the most effective actions to take to fullfill the vision. This 'made in Saskatchewan' approach will address our shared priorities through practical, cooperative and effective strategies over the long term.

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A FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION

POLICY STATEMENT

JANUARY, 2001

PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO ISSUES AFFECTING METIS AND OFF-RESERVE FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE IN SASKATCHEWAN

Saskatchewan leads the nation in productive partnerships with Metis and First Nations people. These partnerships contribute greatly to our social and economic well being as a province. As the next century approaches, our ability to work cooperatively toward our common goals will grow in importance.

It is important for all of us to participate in setting the stage in a positive way for the future, to avoid the experiences of the past. The people of Saskatchewan recognize the need to continue to expand and improve our partnerships with Metis and off-reserve First Nations people. Part of this requires that we all work together, with the federal and municipal governments and other partners, to identify new and practical ways to address issues of concern to Aboriginal people in areas such as education, training and work preparation, employment, as well as individual and community well-being.

As a first step in this process, the government of Saskatchewan developed a ***Framework for Cooperation*** to guide community discussions on these issues. This document summarizes the outcomes of those discussions and presents a common vision, principles to guide our future work as partners, and goals and objectives for action that respond to community priorities.

THE *FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION*

Our Vision

All residents of Saskatchewan, including Metis and off-reserve First Nations people, will have the opportunities and resources to participate fully in our communities and our economies. Through education, training, employment, quality health care and other services, all people in Saskatchewan will contribute to, and benefit from the riches of our society. We will realize the potential of our shared future together.

Principles to Guide Our Work

- Fairness and equity;
- Partnerships among the federal and provincial governments, local governments, existing and evolving Aboriginal organizations and institutions, Crown corporations, businesses, unions, other non-governmental sectors, communities and individuals;
- Practical, timely, meaningful and sustainable responses to needs, to foster self-reliance;
- Consistency with the provincial position that the federal government is responsible for services to Aboriginal peoples while acknowledging that the province is responsible for addressing the needs of Aboriginal peoples as residents of Saskatchewan;
- Flexible administrative arrangements that retain accountability to the Province, Aboriginal people, and the public;
- Respect for Aboriginal peoples' cultures and rights, as recognized in the *Constitution Act, 1982*;
- Involvement of Aboriginal peoples in decision-making, and the design and delivery of services; and,
- Ethical, fair and constructive reporting practices that focus on outcomes.

AREAS WHERE WE CAN WORK TOGETHER

Community participants at the discussions confirmed the goals and areas for working together that were proposed in the *Framework for Cooperation* discussion document of January, 1999. Based on the vision and principles, the Government of Saskatchewan, in partnership with Metis and off-reserve First Nations people, their organizations and institutions, the federal and local governments and other key partners, will focus our future work together on four key goals: education; preparing for work; participating in the provincial economy; and, individual and community well-being.

Community Priorities for Education

Community participants told us that their priorities for the future include primary, secondary and post-secondary education with an emphasis on assisting Aboriginal children to stay in school, keep them in school, and graduate from high school.

Goal One ***Enhance the successful entrance and completion of primary, secondary and post-secondary education for Metis and off-reserve First Nations people.***

Our Objectives

1. Increase retention rates in high school for Metis and off-reserve First Nations students.
2. Increase the proportion of Metis and off-reserve First Nations students completing high school, or an equivalent.
3. Increase literacy rates, academic upgrading and life skills of Metis and off-reserve First Nations people.
4. Increase enrollment and completion rates for Metis and off-reserve First Nations people in university, technical education, apprenticeship and training programs.
5. Increase Aboriginal children's readiness to learn, cope and problem-solve in the provincial school system.
6. Increase achievement rates for Metis and off-reserve First Nations students in the provincial school system.

Community Priorities in Preparing for Work

Community participants told us that their priorities for the future include skills training and work preparation to equip people so that they can actively participate in the provincial workforce.

Goal Two ***Prepare Metis and off-reserve First Nations people to participate in a representative provincial workforce.***

Our Objectives

1. Increase enrollment and completion rates for Metis and off-reserve First Nations students in apprenticeship, training and post-secondary education programs that relate to growth sectors of the economy and sectors with stable employment opportunities.
2. Ensure Metis and off-reserve First Nations youth make the transition from school to employment and training.

Community Priorities - the Provincial Economy

Community participants told us that their priorities for the future include jobs and economic development to facilitate family stability.

Goal Three ***Ensure representative workforce participation by Metis and off-reserve First Nations people in the provincial economy.***

Our Objectives

1. Increase the proportion of employed Metis and off-reserve First Nations people in the labour market to a representative level.
2. Achieve a representative presence of Metis and off-reserve First Nations people in the provincial public service by 2010, in accordance with government's Employment Equity Plan, as directed by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.
3. Achieve a representative presence of Metis and off-reserve First Nations people in economic development, business involvement, and as employers.

Community Priorities for Well-Being

Community participants told us that their priorities for the future include youth (keeping children off the streets and sport and recreation activities), the rising incidence of diabetes among Metis and off-reserve First Nations people, culturally-sensitive social services, and housing.

Goal Four ***Improve individual and community well-being of Metis and off-reserve First Nations people.***

Our Objectives

1. Expand access to culturally appropriate social services and reduce the need for such services among Metis and off-reserve First Nations people.
2. Bring Metis and off-reserve First Nations peoples' participation rates in cultural, sport and recreational activities in line with non-Aboriginal participation rates.
3. Better meet the health needs of Metis and off-reserve First nations people such that their health status approximates that of the non-Aboriginal population.
4. Increase Metis and off-reserve First Nations peoples' representation on a minimum of four or five additional health governance structures, especially District Health Boards, until representative participation is achieved.
5. Develop culturally appropriate restorative justice strategies with Metis and off-reserve First Nations people that constructively respond to crime and reduce off-reserve Aboriginal crime rates.
6. Enhance the safety and security of Aboriginal women and children by reducing victimization rates.
7. Reduce the incidence of repeat offending among Metis and off-reserve First Nations people through reintegrative and rehabilitative correctional services.
8. Increase the proportion of Metis and off-reserve First Nations people living in adequate, affordable housing.

THE WORK BEGINS

It is important for Saskatchewan to participate in setting the stage for the future in a positive way. Saskatchewan is committed to involving Metis and off-reserve First Nations people and the public in decision-making. Last year, the Province listened to Aboriginal people and the public, and the communities helped us to shape this framework for our ongoing and future work together.

We have a shared future and we will realize its potential together. Cooperation leads to partnership, partnership leads to innovation, and innovation leads to opportunities for everyone involved.

Thank-you for working with us in this process.

We invite you to send any additional comments to:

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